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only reason for the reply recently given by the government in the House of Commons to a question regarding legislation for the creation of a Ministry of Public Health. He appealed, therefore, to all interests concerned to sink minor differences and to approach the problem of public health administration as a whole from the broad national standpoint and in a courageous spirit.

#### EDUCATIONAL NOTES AND NEWS

A COMMITTEE consisting of Regent Schulz and Deans Thatcher and Vance has been appointed to plan the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the University of Minnesota. The inauguration of President Burton will be one of the chief features. In view of the war conditions the celebration is planned to be of state interest only.

THE Harvard summer engineering camp at Squam Lake, N. H., has been abandoned on account of the war and owing to the fact that the expenses of the camp can not be met unless more than the thirty students already registered attend.

At Louisiana State University, Assistant Professor S. T. Sanders has been made head of the department of mathematics, and Dr. I. C. Nichols has been appointed associate professor.

MR. ROY RICHARD DENSLow, assistant tutor in the department of chemistry, College of the City of New York, has been appointed instructor in Smith College.

#### DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

##### LUMINOSITY OF RECTIFIER ELECTRODE

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In setting up as a demonstration experiment, the well-known arrangement for rectifying an alternating current, the essential part of which is an aluminum rod and lead plate in ten per cent. sodium phosphate solution, the following observation was made, which may be well known but which I wish to take this opportunity of

mentioning, since I have not found it described anywhere in connection with the experiment.

When the aluminum rod is positive, that is to say, when the current is in such direction that it will not pass through the rectifier, a very distinct luminosity appears over the surface of the aluminum and if the applied potential is as high as 250 volts, this luminosity becomes quite brilliant enough to be observed by a spectroscope. This is not due to local heating since the aluminum is only gently warmed. The glow is orange yellow in color and, through a direct-vision spectroscope, shows a continuous spectrum through the red, yellow and green with a trace of blue. Phosphorescence is suggested, possibly similar to that shown by alum.

May I lay this before your readers in the hope that some one of them may be familiar with, and have an explanation for, this luminosity. Our time at present is so taken up with other matters that investigation of it can not be pushed as would otherwise be the case.

HARVEY B. LEMON  
RYERSON PHYSICAL LABORATORY,  
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

##### AN UNUSUALLY BRILLIANT HALO

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: The very complete halos visible at Boulder, Colo., on the morning of January 10, 1918, are perhaps worthy of a brief description.

The phenomena were first observed when the sun was about  $10^{\circ}$  or  $12^{\circ}$  high. At this time all of the  $22^{\circ}$  halo that was above the horizon was very distinct. The white horizontal parhelic circle extending each way from the sun to a short distance outside the  $22^{\circ}$  halo was also plainly marked and the parhelia where it crossed the halo were very bright, though somewhat diffuse. In about half an hour the  $22^{\circ}$  halo became much brighter showing red on the inside and a faint blue on the outside. Above the sun, tangent to this halo and convex toward the sun, appeared the usual ox-yoke-shaped arc of a pale pink tinge. During this time also the  $46^{\circ}$  halo appeared and be-